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R.

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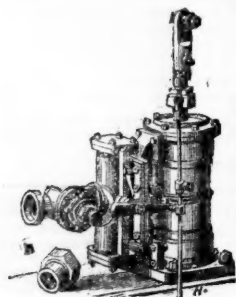
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THE POLYHYMNIAN CHOIR.

WE have, several times during the last season, noticed the progress which this body of amateur gentlemen has made under the direction of Mr. William Rea, and have recognised their industrious efforts to come before the public as a choir, so far cultivated and polished as to hope for a fair share of favour and support. We now insert a copy of their report, presented at a meeting for the general business of the choir.

The meeting was held in the Throne Room, Crosby Hall, on Thursday evening, July 14th. The librarian, Mr. Nathaniel Cork, in the chair. The chairman opened the meeting by explaining its objects, which were to hear the annual report and financial statement of the committee, and the auditor's report, to elect officers for the year ensuing, and to consider any casual matters which might arise. The chairman then called upon the secretary, Mr. J. J. Cayley, to read the report, which was as follows:—

"GENTLEMEN,—In bringing to a close the proceedings of this the third season of the Polyhymnian Choir, the Committee cannot disguise the almost, if not entirely, unqualified satisfaction and pleasure they feel in presenting to you their annual report.

"Such a statement will, of course, lead you to expect that a great advance can be shown towards the attainment of the high objects at which we aim, and your committee therefore enter without hesitation into the details upon which they base their confident position.

"It is advantageous always to recollect the purpose and end for which this choir was established, for by this means we are led to inquire not only the amount of progress which has been made, but whether or not that progress has been in a right direction. The intention then was not to form a school for elementary education; the admission into our choir presupposes, on the part of the member admitted, a good knowledge of the rudiments of music, and some idea of the art of singing. Neither was our object the mere accumulation of a large mass of amateur choristers, who should simply present an imposing scene—imposing in the double sense of a great display of numbers, and a great lack of the results which such numbers ought to produce. But, being fully persuaded that a much higher degree of excellence in choral part-singing than had been generally attained was practicable, the originators of this Choir determined first upon the realisation of this object, leaving the questions of dimensions and other matters of organisation to be determinable by the results of experience.

"To proceed. The first and most important cause for congratulation undoubtedly is the retention of Mr. Rea as the musical head and heart of the choir. Your committee would repudiate, as they know you would also, any attempt to flatter a gentleman who is undeserving of so ill a compliment. Nor is there any reason why they should pursue any such course. Mr. Rea is constantly with you, and most of you being, or having been, variously connected with other musical societies, have as good opportunities of forming a correct opinion on this point as have your committee; and the voluntary and hearty testimony you repeatedly render of perfect security in, and thorough good opinion of, Mr. Rea as a tutor and a conductor, reduces the task of your committee to a simple record of your entire sympathy with them in this offer of thanks and confidence which they beg Mr. Rea to accept.

"Still the committee feel it their duty to remind you that Mr. Rea was one of the very first promoters of the Choir, and that, through all the fluctuations of its success, he has never swerved from the one line he had marked out, nor loosened his hold upon that which had been gained; and, even when our prospects were scarcely encouraging, he began and perseveringly carried on the task of planting the germs of that musical education which has taken root in our soil, and which we believe to be indigenous and specially belonging to us as a choir, and the growth of which he has studied to cultivate in this last season by a comprehensive epitome on the opening evening, by a series of excellent lessons in the art of singing, by lectures upon musical rhetoric and elocution, and by special rehearsals for single parts which afforded an opportunity for improvement in all the minutiae which cannot be entered into in general rehearsals. And, gentlemen, these are advantages with which your committee are not aware that any other choir in the metropolis has been favoured. So that, when they add that, without fee or reward, Mr. Rea has subtracted from the time which might have been devoted to remunerative professional occupations an amount sufficient for all this, your committee are assured they have shown abundant reason for calling your attention, first of all, to this source of mutual congratulation.

"The internal progress of the choir also fully justifies the position

your committee have taken. At the close of last season the Choir consisted of forty-five gentlemen, but of these some ten did not reunite with us this season. An urgent request had, however, been laid before the members, that they would use their utmost endeavours to obtain candidates for membership early in this season, that our numbers might rise to eighty, which was the limit then prescribed. In spite of a high standard of qualifications proposed, we had a large influx of applicants, 145 of whom submitted to the test; 78 were accepted, and 62 of these are now members. Our numbers are at the present time 12 altos, 20 first tenors, 25 second tenors, 23 first basses, and 20 second basses, being a total of exactly 100 voices.

"The important matter of regularity of attendance has undergone some improvement. In the first quarter of this season we held 13 meetings, the average number present was 58, the ratio of attendance being 85 per cent. of full. Second quarter, 14 meetings, average number 65, ratio 79 per cent. Third quarter, 16 meetings, average number 77, ratio 82 per cent. In one comparative idea, the highest number in any one meeting last year was 44, and the ratio of attendance for the whole season 72 per cent., while the highest number this year was 94, and the ratio 82 per cent. Thus, while your committee regret having found it necessary in as many as 12 instances this season to carry into force the rule which declares a membership void by irregularity of attendance, yet they receive with great pleasure this earnest of an intention on the part of the general body to respond to the appeals they have constantly made upon this essential and vital point.

"As the immediate result of this, Mr. Rea has been enabled to pass through rehearsal forty works, each of which has, on an average, been carefully gone through six times; but, to show what pains have been taken where specially necessary, some have been rehearsed nineteen times. While on this point, your committee beg your attention not only to the number but the character of the compositions performed. They are such as will tend not only to establish for us a reputation as caterers for the amusement of our audiences, but will also by their intrinsic merit, as well as by the excellent manner of their performance, assist in the advancement of art. Indeed, to Mr. Rea we owe an extra debt for the jealous manner in which he has guarded us from jeopardizing our credit or sinking into error upon this point. These forty works include five by Mr. Rea, nine by Mendelssohn, one of these being an entire tragedy; five by Weber, two by Beethoven, three by Callcott, and the others various. Those written expressly for us being the five by Mr. Rea, two by Miss Stirling, and one by Mr. G. A. Macfarren. As a remoter result we have sung at our concerts 61 times, and 16 times have responded to a redemand.

"But it is the rapid and sure upward tendency of the Choir in the scale of musical societies, and the high position and excellent name and fame which you have attained for it during the past season, with respect to the critics, the profession, and the public, which afford your committee such unqualified encouragement, and induce them to place before you a report so lofty in tone and so full of hope and assurance. In support of this may be mentioned the many applications for our assistance at concerts and public entertainments, which, from a sense of fairness, or from consideration to our members, or from other reasons, we have thought it advisable to decline. Then again, from the many offers of assistance at our concerts which we have received from pianists and singers of high class. Again, from the interest and curiosity which have taken root and are spreading among the members and officials of other societies, and even in the highest circles of the musical profession, and which develop themselves in applications for admission to hear our rehearsals and performances, in very kind offers from composers of recognised good name to write works for us, in the actual receipt of many such works, which your committee have yet to bring forward, and in various other ways. Lastly and specially, from the notices we have received from the critics and the press, which have been numerous and very cheering; their general tone having been such as is likely to lead the public to appreciate our efforts in such a manner as we believe they deserve.

"In the importance of our public concerts we have made very great strides. In our report of last year we noticed the assistance we had received from the Orchestral Society,* who divided with us the responsibility of some undertakings which were too considerable for us to enter into alone. But in the present season we have given five concerts,—three of them on a grand scale at Hanover-square Rooms,—in which, with the exception of the pianoforte performances of Miss Morrison and Mr. Walter Macfarren, we have received no assistance, and yet our audiences have been large and sometimes overflowing.

"In the very essential matter of funds, your committee must confess having found considerable difficulties throughout the season, but after

* An Amateur Orchestral Society, also conducted by Mr. Rea.

watching closely for every opportunity to add to their means, and carefully economising those at their disposal, they have the happiness to show that the expenditure of about £270 has been provided for, and a small balance left in hand. Your committee would be wanting in politeness, and even justice, were they to pass unnoticed the energies of the members to support them in this task. Your committee have always objected to impose a subscription as a condition of membership, and even when such a course was proposed by some members, they did not urge it, preferring to show their confidence in your voluntary aid, by means which were open to you, namely, the obtaining subscribers, and the sale of tickets for our concerts. With this feeling they undertook great responsibilities on the faith of your firm adherence, and you never failed them; they are aware they have made repeated calls upon your efforts, but you were their only certain and safe resource, and whenever they have trusted on you they have never found you reel or stagger under the load. The committee might mention special instances in which members have been enabled to assist them largely, but, while satisfied that every one of you has done his very utmost, it would be invidious, and perhaps unkind, to single out any in particular; therefore, gentlemen, they beg you will all accept their acknowledgements alike, for while the aid which some have rendered us has been considerable, yet the surplus in hand is not so large but that he whose efforts have achieved least may take to himself the pleasant feeling of having caused the balance to come out on the right side instead of on the wrong.

"Your committee regret that their endeavours to relieve you of this task by concluding negotiations with which you were made acquainted, should have failed for the present; but if their first impression was one of disappointment it was dispelled by the extraordinary stimulus which even the failure gave to your enthusiasm, and the unanimous determination which it produced in you to achieve, by your own unassisted energies, that which your committee had been unable to accomplish by extraneous means.

"It now remains to record our special thanks to all the ladies and gentlemen from whom favours have been promised or received; at the head of whom stands Mr. G. A. Macfarren, who kindly re-arranged for us his glee "King Canute," and who has, in very many ways, shown his interest in the Choir; also to Miss Morrison and Mr. Walter Macfarren for assistance at our concerts; to Miss Stirling, Mrs. Bartholomew, Mr. H. Gadsby, Mr. Blanchard of Dublin, and others, for original compositions received; to Mr. H. W. Barlow, for his kindness in obtaining for Mr. Rea the *entrée* to the library of the Western Madrigal Society; to Mr. Gibsons, the secretary of that society, also for kind attentions shown to Mr. Rea; to Messrs. Leader and Cook for very liberal offer of the presentation of a sufficient number of part-copies for the whole Choir of a part-song; to Mr. Volekman, senior, for the gratuitous use of room for special rehearsals and committee meetings, by which the committee have been spared considerable expense; to Mr. Nathaniel Cork, for special arrangements with respect to the use of music, which were of great service to the committee, and which were totally distinct from the duties of his office; and to Mr. John Keymer, for great interest in, and actual assistance to, the Choir in many ways, and particularly in designing, engraving, and presenting to the Choir a handsome steel plate for tickets.

"Your committee wish, in passing, to remind you of several minor matters in which they will be seen to have studied your convenience and comforts. At the commencement of the season they obtained for your rehearsals a larger and more commodious room than had before been at your service, and immediately endeavoured to couple with it a better organisation, in the matter of seats and music, each member having his own place and his own book, which in the case of a concert, was, by enormous labour and pains, made up of the pieces which were to be sung, arranged in proper succession, and, together with a programme, placed upon the seat, thereby relieving him of all trouble or anxiety on any such account. These, and many similar things, may appear trifling in themselves, but your committee beg you will estimate them both at their own value, and, also, as a guarantee that they will not fail to study every means to render the Choir such as shall justify any member in feeling proud to acknowledge his association with it.

"If it be not out of the province of a report to anticipate, your committee beg to congratulate you also upon two events near at hand. Firstly, your appearance at the Crystal Palace, which will possess the double charm of displaying the Choir in the midst of a great school of art, and of assisting an association* whose objects, though sought by different means, are quite akin to our own. Secondly, the festive evening which you propose to spend together on Thursday next, and which your committee sincerely hope will afford you all the pleasure that can possibly be derived from each other's society.

* The Early Closing Association.

"With respect to the next season, your committee have already several plans under consideration. They propose, as early as possible in the vacation, to fix arrangements for a definite course of procedure, the great advantage of which will be that with your full assistance at the very commencement of the season, the Choir may be brought forward at a much earlier date than in last year, and before the interest of the public in musical performances has become too divided.

"To this end, gentlemen, your committee wish to leave as the latest, most clear, and fixed impressions on your minds, two paramount points. Firstly, the importance of responding promptly to their first summons, and of uniformly keeping up the future attendance to that high level; and secondly, the obtaining as large an accession as possible to our list of subscribers. Your attention to these two particulars would secure us the best chance of success, and would relieve your committee of very much of the anxiety which has hitherto rested upon them.

"And now, gentlemen, as this is the last time this season your committee will meet you officially, they beg the pleasure to wish you, through our vacation, the very best of health and recreation, and also to remind you that about the beginning of September you may expect to hear from them, when they sincerely trust to see you *enery one* again bringing with him an enthusiasm and ardour not only undiminished, but increased and re-invigorated, and finally to bid you until then a hearty and cordial farewell."

The report was received with long continued applause. The chairman then called upon the treasurer, Mr. W. Volekman, jun., who presented the financial statement, which, as has been already stated, showed a small balance in hand, and was also received with marked approbation.

The auditors' report was called for, and Mr. J. Bates, in presenting it, spoke in eulogising terms of the manner in which the affairs of the Choir had been managed.

The report was unanimously adopted, and ordered to be printed. The financial statement passed, the elections proceeded with, sundry other matters despatched, and a few encouraging remarks from the chairman, a vote of thanks to him brought the meeting to a close.

GLOUCESTER MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

Gloucester, Tuesday.

At a time when all London is out of town, and the poor unfortunate individuals who are still left in the mighty Babylon have absolutely nothing in the shape of musical fare set before them, the provinces are wakened up from their usual regularity (we had almost said dullness), by the advent of those stars who whilom delighted the ears of the Babylonians aforesaid. But a short interval elapses since the last notes of the Bradford meeting have died out, when lo, another Triennial Festival succeeds, and, after the aristocracy of the wool gatherings have been delectated, the *élite* of the cyder counties have their turn. The London critic who, has done severe duty through a long and broiling season, has still to meet the same old familiar faces, still to hear the notes of the but too well remembered music, and, instead of being able to "fly away and be at rest," to "seek fresh scenes and pastures new," must remain in harness; go pen in hand and narrate to the newspaper reading world how the various performers have acquitted themselves, who was encoored and who was not, what pieces created a furore, and what fell dull on the public ear. Well, after Bradford and its huge warehouses, tall chimneys, and smoky canopy, which does duty for sky, it is refreshing to find oneself in the quiet old city of Gloucester, with its four main streets named after the cardinal points, its glorious old cathedral lifting up its gray old tower, (at once one of the most massive and elegant specimens of the kind in England) in serene majesty against a clear blue sky, here and there chequered with white flecks of cloud, to see the gentle Severn (so suggestive of the most delicately coloured and exquisitely flavoured salmon in the world) winding (the river, not the fish) at one's feet, and to breathe an atmosphere fresh from the Cotteswold hills and as near an approach to purity as the soul of a Londoner can imagine. Instead of being obliged to repeat the oft told tale that the precis and responses were Tallis's, the chant Jones, and the anthem Attwood, how the pent up critic

longs to make excursions to those same Cotteswolds or Malverns, and with vigorous strides ascertain for himself the glories of the views from the various points of observation. But the fates ordain it otherwise, and if the individual in question is desirous to "show his eyes and glad his heart" with such things he must wait until the church of St. Peter and the Hall of Shire have done calling upon him alternately to perform his functions.

Having then relieved our feelings by saying what we should like to do, let us perform our duty by writing what we ought to do—something about the object which has brought us here. This then is the 136th meeting of the choirs of Gloucester, Worcester, and Hereford, for the benefit of the widows and orphans of clergymen in the three dioceses, and is under the patronage of the two most illustrious personages in Great Britain, besides having for president the Duke of Beaufort, and the Lord Lieutenants and Bishops of the three counties and dioceses for vice-presidents. Forty-four gentlemen hold the responsible office of stewards, and the most onerous post of the executive is sustained by Mr. Secretary Brown, to whom the Gloucester Festival is greatly indebted for many of its past successes. One very familiar name and no less familiar face will be missed from this year's festival—Mr. Thomas Turner, who has been intimately associated with the meetings for the last half century, and time after time accepted the onus of stewardship when it involved a very serious loss of money, and whose polite attentions to the artists will not be readily forgotten. To the universal regret of all who knew him, Mr. Turner expired last week at the ripe age of seventy-six, and is this day buried, an event which has cast quite a gloom upon the old frequenters of the Festival, and the inhabitants of the city generally, by whom his kindness and liberality were thoroughly known and appreciated. With this one exception everything is as gay and promising as could be desired. The sale of tickets is unprecedented, and the number of places secured beforehand far exceeds any former meeting. The proceedings opened this morning with *The Dead March in Saul* played as a mark of respect to the memory of the gentleman just alluded to. The *Dettingen Te Deum*, in which Mrs. Hepworth, Miss Lascelles, Messrs. Montem Smith, and Thomas, sustained the principal parts; Mendelssohn's anthem *As the Hart Pants*, and the stock anthem *The Coronation*, already alluded to, following the sermon, which was preached by the Rev. Canon Harvey, from a text taken from the 1st of Thessalonians, 5th chapter, 12th and 13th verses. "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, and to be at peace among yourselves." The attendance numbered 1,700, and the collections at the doors in aid of the charity amounted to £203 14s. 8d. a larger sum than is usually obtained the first day. Among the ladies who held the plates were the following: Lady Charlotte Carnegie, Lady Augustus Wyndham, Miss Canon Harvey, Mrs. Canon Banks, Miss Dutton, Miss Sherwood, Mrs. Thomas Evans, Mrs. Brooke Hunt, Miss Rice, &c. This evening, the first concert will be given at the Shire Hall, and to-morrow the *Elijah* at the Cathedral, of which more anon. We had nearly omitted to state, that the service was intoned by the Rev. E. K. Luscombe, and the lessons read by the Rev. C. Crawley, minor canons of the Cathedral.

Gloucester, Wednesday.

Despite the unpropitious state of the weather last night, when it rained steadily and incessantly for several hours, the concert at the Shire Hall was far more numerous attended than at any previous first evening we can remember at Gloucester. The programme displayed at least one feature of novelty for the choirs, and a decided improvement upon the previous *olla podrida* arrangements—namely, the appropriating the first part to one composer—Mozart enjoying that honour last night, as will be seen by the following:—

PART I.

Overture and Selection from "Don Giovanni"	Mozart.
Aria—"Madamina," Signor Belletti	"
Duet—"La ci darem," Madame Clara Novello and Signor Vialletti	"

Aria—"Il mio tesoro," Signor Giuglini	Mozart.
Trio—"Ah taci," Mdlle. Titiens, Signor Vialletti, and Signor Belletti	"
Aria—"Batti, batti," Madame Clara Novello	"
Aria—"Deh vieni," Signor Badiali	"
Quartet—"Non ti fidar," Mdlle. Titiens, Madame Clara Novello, Signor Giuglini, and Signor Badiali	"
Aria—"Fin ch'han dal vino," Signor Badiali	"
Aria—"Non mi dir," Mdlle. Titiens	"
Sestet—"Sola, Sola," Mdlle. Titiens, Madame Clara Novello, Miss Dolby, Signor Giuglini, Signor Badiali, and Signor Belletti	"

To Signor Giuglini in "Il mio tesoro," and Signor Badiali in "Fin ch'han dal vino," were awarded encores, an attempt being also made in favour of Madame Clara Novello in "Batti, batti," which was sung (to our mind) in a manner very different to what it might have been. Mdlle. Titiens seemed to make a profound impression in this her first appearance in Gloucester, and was warmly received and heartily applauded by her audience, who were enthusiastic in their demonstrations after her finely dramatic rendering of the aria "Non mi dir." The magnificent sestet, without exception one of the most marvellously fine pieces of concerted music ever written, was given with immense effect, and brought the selection to a close most admirably. Beethoven's choral fantasia, which succeeded, introduced a young lady (from the western provinces, we believe), Miss Summerhayes, as solo *pianiste*. However commendable the choice of such a piece as a first essay before a strange audience might have been, we think that something less ambitious would have been more effective in the hands of this young lady, who appears to have overtaxed her physical powers in selecting a work of this dimension. The band and chorus, too, materially helped to damage Miss Summerhayes's playing, being not only too loud throughout for the *pianiste*, but committing irregularities which showed that there could have been little or no rehearsal: for this no one can be blamed but the conductor. Under these circumstances we shall reserve our judgment until Thursday evening, when we shall have another opportunity of hearing the young lady, merely remarking that she is very juvenile in appearance, and seemed, not unnaturally, to be labouring under some trepidation, which experience will, no doubt, tend to diminish. The second part of the concert was miscellaneous, and was fortunately permitted to pass with but one encore, which fell to Mdlle. Titiens and Signor Giuglini, for the duet "Parigi o cara," which, however hackneyed it may be to London ears, appeared to possess a great charm for the Gloucester audience. We append the remainder of the scheme, which generally went well, Mr. Thomas particularly affording satisfaction by his spirited rendering of the Pedlar's song from Mendelssohn's *Son and Stranger*:—

PART II.

Overture (Zampa)	Hérold.
Trio, "Memory," Mrs. Clare Hepworth, Miss Lascelles, and Mr. Montem Smith	Leslie.
Ballet, "Many a time and oft," Miss Dolby	Duggan.
Song, "The merry bells," Mrs. Clare Hepworth	H. Smart.
Duet, "Parigi o cara," Madame Titiens and Signor Giuglini (Traviata)	Verdi.
Quartet, "May Song," Mrs. Clare Hepworth, Miss Dolby, Mr. Montem Smith, and Mr. Thomas	Mendelssohn.
Song, "I am a Roamer," Mr. Thomas	Mendelssohn.
God save the Queen.	

Considerable disappointment was experienced at the non-appearance of Mr. Sims Reeves, from whom a letter was read regretting his inability to sing in consequence of his continued hoarseness and cold, which had been increased by his journey from London, whence he only arrived in the evening. The audience perhaps were not aware that Mr. Reeves was one of the inmates of the Oatlands Park Hotel last week at the time it took fire, and had with Mrs. Reeves and family to make a hasty retreat, and spend the best (or worst) part of a night on a damp lawn. The weather here still remains unsettled, and it would seem that Gloucester has taken a leaf out of the weather-table of Bradford as set forth at the first two festivals. Up to a late

hour last night the bells of the various churches rang muffled peals in memory of the late Mr. Turner, of whom we append a short memoir, taken from the *Gloucester Journal*:—

"DEATH OF THOMAS TURNER, ESQ.—In our obituary we have recorded the death of Mr. Thomas Turner, one of the oldest and most respected inhabitants of this city, in which he constantly resided during a life extended to 76 years. Until 1825, Mr. Turner and his father, with the late Capt. Morris (who represented Gloucester in Parliament for many years) and Capt. Morris's son, conducted an extensive banking establishment in this city, with numerous branches extending over this and the adjoining counties and a large part of South Wales. In the latter end of 1825, this bank was closed, and since that time Mr. Turner has confined himself principally to the care of the financial interests of the numerous public and charitable institutions of which he was the treasurer, including with various others the Gloucester Infirmary, the Three Choirs, &c. On all of these he bestowed unremitting attention till within a few months of his death, when his increasing infirmity compelled him to give them up. Besides being a good and punctual man of business, universally trusted, Mr. Turner was a munificent and discriminating patron of the fine arts. An enthusiastic admirer of Shakspeare, he got together, with much labour and great expense, the materials for an edition of his works more complete and more elaborately illustrated than any edition hitherto published. He was a good judge of pictures, and has left behind him a valuable collection. Himself no mean musician, he has been all his life a warm and kind patron of musical talent, wherever found. For upwards of fifty years he has been an active supporter of the Triennial Meetings at Gloucester of the Three Choirs (Worcester, Hereford, and Gloucester), and a considerable portion of the success with which these meetings have been attended must be attributed to his exertions. There are few men whose loss will be more sincerely regretted by a large circle of friends and connections."

Considerable dissatisfaction is expressed in various quarters, among professionals and non-professionals, natives and strangers, at the unaccountable withdrawal of Mr. Weiss's name from the programme. The following letter asks one or two questions on the subject, which it would be as well if the stewards, or conductor, or whoever the responsible persons may be, were to answer:—

"THE FORTHCOMING MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

"To the Editor of the *Gloucester Journal*."

"SIR,—Can any of your numerous readers, or the authorities of the forthcoming music meeting, inform me why the name of Mr. Weiss, which appeared in all the preliminary announcements, and also in the original programme, is now withdrawn? Is it because a subordinate position was assigned to that gentleman, who certainly is entitled to rank as our first English bass? At the last Gloucester Festival, Mr. Weiss sustained the whole of the bass part of the *Elijah*, which this time is allotted to Signor Belletti, who has also the lion's share each morning, monopolising the *Elijah* on Wednesday, the only effective portion of Thursday's selection, and two out of the three airs in the *Messiah*. At Worcester and Hereford Mr. Weiss sang the *Elijah* most effectively, as also at last Birmingham Festival, where Signor Belletti was likewise engaged. I do not for a moment deny the great artistic merits of Signor Belletti, but I certainly do think that a singer whose reputation is so highly established as that of Mr. Weiss should have been entitled to better treatment than being placed in the subordinate position in which his name appeared in the first programme. Moreover, upon an occasion so eminently English, and in oratorios composed expressly for England, as were the *Elijah* and *Messiah*, I think that an Englishman would have been more in place. At any rate, the honours might have been fairly divided, by giving one artist the entire bass part in each of these great works, and the *Stabat Mater*—as it is—to Signor Belletti. Surely, the Italians have sufficient opportunities of display in the evening concerts."

"A little information on the subject would be acceptable to the public (who have a right to know why an established favourite is thus ignored), and also to the professional musician, as well as

"Sept. 8, 1859."

"Your obedient servant,

"AN AMATEUR."

In calling attention to this matter, we do not in the slightest degree question the great and deserved reputation of Signor Belletti, nor the high merits of Mr. Thomas (who has been engaged in place of Mr. Weiss) as a thoroughly efficient bass singer, but at the same time we think there has been a great mistake committed somewhere, and the treatment to which Mr.

Weiss appears to have been subjected requires some explanation from those who best know the history of the case.

This morning the cathedral was thronged with an audience numbering some 1,450 persons, among whom were many of the aristocracy and *élite* of this and the surrounding counties, for whose names we refer our readers to the columns of the daily and fashionable papers. In our yesterday's account, want of time compelled us to omit noticing the great improvement which has been effected since the last festival by the filling in the large west window with stained glass to the memory of the late Bishop Monk, by the munificence of his friend, the Rev. Murray Browne, Honorary Canon. The subjoined description will best give an idea of this really beautiful memorial:—

"THE MEMORIAL WINDOW TO THE LATE BISHOP MONK.—The magnificent stained glass window over the west door of our cathedral, which has been raised by the munificence of the Rev. Murray Browne, honorary canon of the cathedral, as a memorial to his esteemed friend the late Bishop Monk, is now complete. The window comprises nine compartments in width, with double transom, very rich tracery, and is in the perpendicular style of architecture. The stained glass which has just been fixed is intended to typify the ordinance of Baptism or the saving effects of Baptism by water. The subjects, which have been judiciously selected and arranged for this purpose, are from the Old and New Testament, beginning from Noah up to the time of the Apostles. The subjects, which are twelve in number, are placed horizontally in the window. These are divided into four divisions, supported and surmounted by bold and elaborate canopies, each of the subjects filling three of the compartments in width. The history of the window begins with the bottom range of groups. The first of these is Noah and his family leaving the Ark, the various animals going before; second, Moses, with uplifted rod, and the children of Israel, with the spoils of the Egyptians, and destruction of Pharaoh and Host; and third, Naaman the leper, washing in the Jordan, with attendants in waiting. The next range begins with the Angel appearing to the Shepherds by night, with the words on scroll, 'Glory to God,' &c.; next the Nativity of Our Lord, with shepherds and wise men appearing in the distance; the next is the Offering of the Magi, or Kings of the East. The third range begins with the Presentation in the Temple, then Our Lord coming up out of the water after Baptism, the Dove descending upon Him; the last of this range is John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness. The upper and last range begins with the Baptism of St. Paul, then the Baptism of Cornelius, finishing with the Baptism of the Jailor of Philippi and his Household. Immediately above these in the tracery are the Emblems of Our Lord's Passion. Ten of the upper compartments are filled with angels with musical instruments, four others with angels adoring. The rest of the tracery is filled with crowns and stars, except the upper portion of all, which is filled with the lamb, the dove, and the word 'Jehovah'; each of these being surrounded with rays. Such is a general description of this remarkable window."

"It is easy to understand how the position over the great door has appropriately suggested an illustration of the 'Doctrine of Baptism,' through which Our Lord has ordained our entrance into His Church. Again, anyone, observing the general construction of the stonework, to form tripartite divisions, transversely by the transoms, and lengthway by the larger mullions, and again these last into triplets by the smaller mullions, would be naturally directed to the arrangement of subjects, which has been carried out by placing three types of Baptism from the Old Testament, each in a triplet below the lower transom; then the representation of Our Lord's baptism between the transoms, and the three notable baptisms recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, above the upper transom. Accordingly we have in the south triplet, below the lower transom, the subject of Noah and the Ark made significant by showing the 'eight souls saved by water.' In the adjoining triplet is placed a picture of the deliverance of the Israelites by the passage through the Red Sea. In the north triplet is depicted the Washing of Naaman the Syrian in Jordan, strikingly conspicuous by the figure of 'the leper as white as snow.' The space betwixt the transoms equalling that below and above, required double designs for each of its triplets, while those more particularly portraying the baptism of Our Lord could only occupy the centre of the whole window. Thus again, passing from the south side, the subject in the lower portion of the triplet is the Annunciation to the Shepherds: the adjoining subject, the Birth of Our Lord in the Stable; and next, the Adoration of the Magi, conspicuous by the dark countenances and the gold offerings. In the upper portion of the triplets, we have, on the south, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, with the beautiful contrast of the Child held by devout Simeon, and of the youthful figure of the Virgin with

that of the aged Anna. In the north is shown the Preaching of John the Baptist, with the striking figure of that Preacher of Repentance. In the centre of the window is conspicuously placed the Baptism of Our Lord, in which artistic skill has, in the most successful manner, arrested our first and chief attention to the figure representing Our Lord, by making this the only single form in any one compartment, and by its rising out of Jordan; with the descending Dove, and by the text in the rays of the glory bringing before the eye that description of the manifestation of the Trinity:—"And Jesus, when He was baptised, went up straightway out of the water, and lo, the Heavens were opened unto him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him, and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." Above the upper transom, again passing from the south, the first triplet contains the baptism of St. Paul, signified in his figure by one hand shading the eyes from the first re-admission of light, and by the other hand retaining hold of a lad, who may have been supposed to have led him in his blindness. Next to this is represented the baptism of Cornelius, by the rich accoutrements of the Roman officer kneeling nigh to St. Peter's feet, and by the armour of a 'devout soldier of them that waited on him continually.' In the north triplet we have a picture of the baptism of the Jailer at Philippi, bringing, by the presence of the wife, infant, and family, to mind, the domestic and doctrinal interest we have in the scripture—"And he was baptised, he and all his, straightway." In the tracery forming the top of the window are introduced angels holding harps for songs of praise, and in the smaller divisions the emblems of the Trinity.

"Mr. Wailles, the artist in stained glass, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, has executed the whole design with much beauty and force in the drawing, the figures being in the size of life, with remarkable fullness, richness, and harmony of colour, and with faithfulness to Scripture deserving the highest praise. We happen to know of his saying that his thoughts had never once been of money or trouble, but only how to do his best in bringing out a work worthy of the position and purposes for which it was intended. We affirm, with all our heart, the success of this declaration, which does him honour, and offer him our best acknowledgements for this noble specimen of his beautiful art, most pleasing to the eye, grateful to the remembrance of the reader of Holy Scripture, and helping to raise the mind and heart in thanksgivings to Our Father in heaven for all his loving kindnesses revealed to us in His redemption of man.

"We may add, that on the removal of the present temporary gallery an ornamental brass will be fixed beneath the window, within the outer stone panel, north of the door, having the following inscription:

"The ornamental glass of the west window is dedicated to the honour of Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be a grateful memorial of His benefits to this diocese, by raising to its Episcopate His servant, James Henry Monk, D.D., enduing him with constancy of purpose and the liberal application of his means towards building churches, supplying parsonages, erecting schools, and aiding infirm incumbents by the assistance of curates.

"James Henry Monk, born Dec. 13th, 1782; attained a Fellowship of Trinity College, in the University of Cambridge, in 1805; was unanimously elected Regius Professor of Greek in 1808; appointed Dean of Peterborough in 1822; consecrated Bishop of this Diocese in 1830; and died June 6, 1856, in steadfast reliance "on the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus Our Lord."

"We cannot refrain from offering our sincere congratulations to the Rev. Canon Browne upon the marked success with which the suggestions of his fine taste and finer feelings have been carried out. The window is a splendid and striking addition to the many beauties of our venerable Cathedral, and its completion will give an impetus to other restorations and improvements which have long been in contemplation; among these, the great east window, in point of size, one of the largest in the kingdom, will, we believe, receive early attention."

The performance of the *Elijah* was generally satisfactory, although in some respects open to criticism, an occasional unsteadiness in some points of the choruses being more than once perceptible, and a want of quickness in taking up the parts also was to be reprehended. The double quartet "For He shall give His angels charge" went more steadily than usual, though being taken slower. The quartet "Cast thy burden," was converted into a trio, through the omission of the bass part which in the programme was assigned to Signor Belletti, who, although in his place, did not seem to understand whether he was to sing or not. A little previous arrangement would prevent the

occurrence of such *contretemps*. Mr. Sims Reeves overcame his hoarseness so far as not only to appear, but to sing magnificently. His delivery of the lovely recitative "Ye people rend your hearts," and the succeeding air of "With all your hearts" being beyond all praise. No less admirable was his rendering of the recitatives "Man of God," and "See now he sleepeth," while the grand air "Then shall the righteous" was declaimed with all the fire and energy which are so peculiarly Mr. Reeves's own. Mdme. Clara Novello sustained the principal solo part, and gave the opening air of the second part, "Hear ye, Israel," with all her accustomed excellence. Signor Belletti sang throughout like a true artist, although in parts we think his voice has hardly depth enough for the music of the *Elijah*. Remarks, however, on the absence of Mr. Weiss were very general. Mrs. Clare Hepworth took the second soprano, and Miss Dolby the first contralto, with Miss Lascelles as an able coadjutor, Mr. Montem Smith and Mr. Thomas also doing good service in all that was set down for them. Some of the choruses were taken too slowly, but for this the conductor, and not the orchestra, was to blame. In "Baal, we cry to thee," this was, as usual, perceptibly the case, and also in one or two more instances we could name. The whole audience remained standing during the "Holy, Holy" chorus. Any applause, of course, would be out of the question in a sacred building, but in many cases an audible murmur and perceptible sensation of delight appeared to thrill through all present, when some of the more particularly effective points had been given. Fine as is the effect of the *Elijah* in a secular building, it is increased a thousand fold in a cathedral, and those who have not yet heard it at the Choir Festivals have yet to learn the full devotional grandeur with which this masterpiece is inspired. The collection amounted to £157 11s. 11d., a sum below that gathered the corresponding day at the last Festival, but as the amount yesterday was considerably above that generally taken the first day, the average of the two may be struck as about the same as usual. The attendance at the concert last night was 415.

Gloucester, Thursday.

As the conversation of an Englishman almost invariably begins with the weather, and my despatch of yesterday was *en règle* in that respect, so I will again conform to custom and tell you how that the skies, although looking threatening on Wednesday morning, contented themselves with the early frown and then cleared off, leaving a fine bright day, which was succeeded by a gloriously clear night, the old cathedral tower displaying its architectural beauties to perfection in the pale moonlight.

The concert opened with Dr. Sterndale Bennett's cantata the *May Queen*, which occupied the whole of the first part, with the exception of the concertante duet of Spohr, for two violins, played to perfection by Messrs Sainton and Blagrove, who, if we remember rightly, gave this same piece here at the last festival, and also at Worcester. A change therefore would have been acceptable. The principal parts of the *May Queen* were allotted to Mrs. Clare Hepworth, Miss Lascelles; Messrs. Sims Reeves and Thomas. The first-named lady, as the heroine, acquitted herself admirably, her voice having considerably increased in volume since her *début* at the meeting of 1856, and her method having also much improved. Mr. Sims Reeves's hoarseness gained upon him to a great extent before the end of the cantata, but he exerted himself to the utmost to overcome it by singing his best, giving his solos and concerted pieces with great feeling and expression. Mr. Thomas, as the bold Robin Hood, sang capitally, and delivered the song "Tis jolly to hunt" with immense spirit, and as if he really meant it. Miss Lascelles, in the little she had to do, was irreproachable. The choruses generally were very well given, although the conductor, as usual, showed a disposition to drag the time. The only other fault we have to find is with the audience, who did not receive this charming work with anything like the warmth it has met with elsewhere. We append the second part of the scheme:—

PART II.

Overture, (Oberon) ... Weber.
Aria, "Prendi per me"—Madame Clara Novello Benedict and Beriot.

Aria, "Tacea la notte," (Trovatore)—Madlle. Titiens ...	Verdi.
Spirit Song—Miss Dolby ...	Haydn.
Duet, "Crudel perche," (Nozze di Figaro)—Mad. Clara Novello and Signor Belletti ...	Mozart.
Aria, "La donna è mobile," (Rigoletto)—Signor Giuglini ...	Verdi.
Song, "Bonnie Prince Charlie"—Mad. Clara Novello ...	
Trio, "Guai se ti sfugge," (Lucrezia Borgia)—Mdlle. Titiens, Sig. Giuglini, and Sig. Vialetti ...	Donizetti.
Song, "Broken vows"—Miss Dolby ...	F. Berger.
Aria, "Sulla poppa"—Signor Belletti ...	Ricci.
Quartet, "Un di se," (Rigoletto)—Mdlle. Titiens, Miss Dolby, Sig. Giuglini, and Sig. Vialetti ...	Verdi.

The band (wisely ignoring the conductor) gave the romantic overture to *Oberon* with the greatest possible effect, indeed, taken altogether, it may be looked upon as the best instrumental performance of the Festival. Mr. Sims Reeves was so completely exhausted, and had so much increased his hoarseness in singing in the *May Queen*, that he was unable to attempt the ballad set down for him, but before leaving made an arrangement with Mad. Clara Novello to sing in his stead. This was duly communicated to the conductor and one of the stewards, who, it seems to us, are too numerous to be useful. Another of these gentlemen, without taking the trouble to make himself acquainted with the real facts of the case, got up and informed the audience "that Mr. Sims Reeves had quietly walked off, and that the stewards must not be blamed, as they could not fetch him back." Of course, loud symptoms of disapprobation followed these remarks. However, Mad. Clara Novello sang the air and rondo of Benedict and De Beriot, and all went smoothly until it came to that lady's turn to sing the song which she had kindly consented to do in consequence of Mr. Reeves' unavoidable absence. Meanwhile an explanation had been made by more than one to the steward whose bad taste we have recorded above, with a request that he would make the *amende honorable* by telling the audience that he had spoken without due information. This, however, was declined, and another steward (the Mayor, we believe) mounted the platform and stated that Mad. Novello would sing in place of Mr. Reeves. Loud cries of "Not enough—explain, explain," followed, and the Mayor "explained" that Mr. Reeves was unwell—a fact of which the audience had already been informed. Mad. Novello insisted that the matter should be set right before she would sing, and, finding the stewards unwilling, or incompetent (both, perhaps) to do so, herself mounted the platform and addressed the audience in the best speech we ever heard, being most thoroughly to the point. The exact words we do not profess to give, but their purport was, that Mr. Reeves had not left the Hall without notice, having informed the conductor, to whom, as an artist, he was responsible, and also one of the stewards, that he was too hoarse to sing, and also that before leaving he had seen every arrangement made to supply his place; that in justice to a brother artist she could not allow the false impression to remain uncorrected, and, as illness might happen to any of them, she begged their indulgence as his substitute. A perfect ovation followed Mad. Novello's address, and the thoroughly hearty and enthusiastic cheering, which lasted several minutes, fairly baffles all attempt at description. The song which she then gave, "Bonnie Prince Charlie," evoked a perfect *furor* of applause. We must briefly dismiss the remainder of the concert by saying that Mdlle. Titiens sang the "Tacea la notte," from *Trovatore*, with splendid effect, and was warmly applauded; and Sig. Giuglini was encoired in the worn-out "La donna è mobile." The attendance numbered 350. The selection to-day at the cathedral comprised Beethoven's *Mount of Olives*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, and Spohr's *Last Judgment*. Mr. Sims Reeves being confined to his bed, the whole of the principal tenor part devolved upon Mr. Montem Smith, who must have undertaken the responsibility at a very short notice. It is not enough to say that he sang well; it was better than well, and showed very clearly that his studies had carried him somewhere beyond what was merely set down for him, as he evinced a familiarity with the music of all three composers, each so great in his own peculiar line, and so different

in style. In the exceedingly difficult and trying air, "Oh, my heart" (*Mount of Olives*), the melodious "Cujus animam" (*Stabat Mater*), and the varied solos of Spohr's "Last Things," Mr. Montem Smith was thoroughly at home, and it is gratifying to find an English singer so thoroughly well up in his knowledge of the standard music to be able to take a principal's part at little more than a moment's notice. Mad. Clara Novello perhaps never sang better than she did this morning in all that was set down for her. In the *Stabat Mater* she particularly excelled, having been the original soprano in Rossini's sacred *chef-d'œuvre*. The music of the *Stabat*, although admirably declaimed by Sig. Belletti, is, in many instances, too low for his voice; his thoroughly musician-like style of singing and artistic knowledge did much, however, to obviate this drawback, while his clear enunciation and distinct delivery might serve as a lesson to many English singers. Mrs. Clare Hepworth too, deserves praise for her careful rendering of the music allotted to her, all of which she sang with great care and judgment. Miss Dolby's well-known excellence was fully displayed and thoroughly appreciated in the "Eac ut portem," which was the only really important solo she had to sing. Mr. Thomas has not only fully confirmed but considerably advanced his reputation as one of the most useful as well as best qualified of our English basses. The choruses were sung with great steadiness and precision throughout, and as many of these (which want of time prevents us from particularising) are replete with difficulties of no ordinary kind, the highest praise is due for their generally unvarying correctness and excellence in all respects. The audience remained standing during Beethoven's "Hallelujah" chorus, and also "Praise his awful name," "Holy, holy," "Blessing, honour," and "Hallelujah" of Spohr's *Last Judgment*. The numbers present amounted to 1,546, and the collection to £211 4s. 1d. Before dismissing this morning's performance, let us make one remark which it would be worth attending to upon a future occasion. The whole was too long by at least one hour, beginning at half-past eleven and concluding at a quarter to four—a little too much when we consider that this incessant morning and evening work has lasted ever since Monday (rehearsals must be borne in mind), and that to-night there is a lengthy scheme which includes Beethoven's Symphony in D. As we began with the weather, so will we conclude, simply stating that it continues magnificent.

MR. AND MRS. CHARLES MATHEWS are about to return to the United States, intending a theatrical tour there. They will go by the *Great Eastern*.

It is said that Mr. Charles Kean has refused the honour of knighthood.

The very liberal offer made to Mr. Charles Dickens, to give his readings in the United States, it is now stated has been rejected by our eminent novelist, who will remain with us on this side the water, and, it is generally understood, give to his "troops of friends" the pleasure of hearing a new story before long.

MUSICAL NOTES.—Madame Czillag, the German *prima donna*, who created so great an impression last season, at the Grand-Opéra in Paris, by her performance of Valentine in the *Huguenots*, and subsequently by her singing at the London Philharmonic, has been engaged next season for the Royal Italian Opera. *Fidelio* and *Der Freischütz* will both be revived for her. —The English opera at Covent Garden commences the season on Monday, October the 3rd, with an English version of Meyerbeer's *Dinorah*. Mr. H. F. Chorley is the poet. Mr. Santley is engaged in the place of Mr. Weiss (surely Miss Louisa Pyne and Mr. Harrison might make use of both basses!), and Miss Billings, a new contralto, has been added to the *troupe*. Mdlle. Parepa, we read but are not assured, will make her first appearance in the *Trovatore*.—Mdlle. Guarducci has quitted Mr. E. T. Smith's travelling operatic company, her services being imperatively demanded in Italy. The celebrated *mezzo-soprano* returns to Drury Lane the ensuing season.

At GLOUCESTER an English Opera Company, under the direction of Mr. Henry Corri, gave three performances last week, comprising *Martha*, *Fra Diavolo*, and *The Love Spell*.

ROYAL ENGLISH OPERA, COVENT GARDEN.—

Under the Management of Miss Louisa Pyne and Mr. W. Harrison, will open for the season on Monday, October 3rd.

The Operatic Company will comprise the following artists:—Miss Louisa Pyne, Miss Pilling (pupil of Mrs. Wood, her first appearance), Miss Fanny Cruise (her first appearance in London), Miss Thirlwall, and Miss Parepa (her first appearance at the Royal English Opera); Mr. Santley (his first appearance), Mr. Henry Haigh, Mr. H. Corri, Mr. G. Honey, Mr. St. Albyn, Mr. Mengis, Mr. Lyall, Mr. Wallworth, Mr. Burdeman, Mr. Terrott, Mr. Maurice de Solia, and Mr. W. Harrison. Conductor, Mr. Alfred Mellon. Ballet:—Madlle. Rosalia Lequin (her first appearance in England), Madlle. Pierron, Madlle. Pasquale, Miss C. Morgan; Mr. W. H. Payne, Mr. H. Payne, Mr. F. Payne, and Mou. Vaudria. A numerous Corps de Ballet. The band and chorus will be on the same scale of completeness as the preceding seasons of the Royal English Opera. The scenery by Messrs. Grieve, Telbin, and W. R. Beverley. Stage Manager, Mr. Edward Stirling. Acting Manager, Mr. Edward Murray. Ballet Master, M. Petit. Chorus Master, Mr. Smythson.

The Box-office will be opened on Monday, Sept. 26th, under the direction of Mr. Parsons. All applications for private boxes and stalls for the season to be addressed to him at the theatre.

N.B. The same system that gave such universal satisfaction last season in the abolition of all fees to box-keepers and charges for booking places will be continued.

DEATHS.

On the 3rd inst., Ella Vittoria Maria Piatti, second daughter of Sig. Alfred Piatti.

On the 9th inst., at Boulogne, Elizabeth Maria, widow of Lieutenant Francis Waugh, 47th M.N.I., second daughter of the late Nicholas Mori, of Bond-street.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. S. A.—Covent Garden Theatre, the new home of the Royal Italian Opera, was re-opened on the 15th of May, 1858.

THE MUSICAL WORLD.

LONDON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1859.

In our last number we published a letter, addressed by Mrs. Howard Paul to the *Manchester Examiner and Times*, in reference to a notice which appeared in that journal, wherein the "re-production" of Mr. Sims Reeves by that accomplished lady had been denominated "a droll piece of burlesque." Mrs. Howard Paul repudiates, with indignation, the idea that her "portraiture" was anything but an imitation, is shocked beyond measure at the idea of any caricature being perpetrated, and feels assured that the warmest friends of Mr. Sims Reeves would acquit her of any desire to hold him up to ridicule. Mrs. Howard Paul thereby wishes it clearly to be understood, that, when she sings "Come into the garden, Maud," "My pretty Jane," or any other popular song of the tenor, costumed à la Reeves, she does not exaggerate, nor descend to caricature; she neither over-sings nor over-acts, but presents a true copy of the original in every respect, in voice, singing, style, expression, manner, force, sentiment, together with looks, deportment, bearing, and every trick and custom of the man in perfect imitation. This is to acknowledge, that, together with extraordinary mimetic powers, Mrs. Howard Paul possesses a voice of the same register, quality, and character as Mr. Sims Reeves; that she can sing as well, or nearly as well; that she has as much command of the voice, is as powerful and vigorous an executant, and as thorough master, or mistress, of all the vocal resources. In defending herself from the charge of the *Manchester Examiner and Times*, Mrs. Howard Paul has placed herself within the horns of a dilemma. She either "imitates" Mr. Reeves, and is in possession of all those qualities we have named, or she does not possess them and is compelled to caricature. Mrs. Howard Paul's defence, therefore, amounts to an assertion that her artistic capabilities are almost commensurate with those of Mr. Sims Reeves.

We have a great respect for Mrs. Howard Paul, and consider her one of the most varied and admirable of the general entertainers now before the public. We have laughed at her "Sketches" many a time and oft, and have been more than once pleased with her vocal displays. It is one thing, however, to be a varied sketcher and an amusing singer, and another to be qualified and constituted to imitate—we take the word in the strict sense ascribed to it by Mrs. Howard Paul—a great vocalist. In the first place, Mrs. Howard Paul's voice is a *contralto*, and Mr. Sims Reeves's a tenor; in character, if not in quality, no two voices can be more dissimilar. Mrs. Howard Paul's voice is so low, that she can descend legitimately into the tenor clef; but this does not endow it with a tenor quality. In the next place, Mrs. Howard Paul sings, for the most part, from the throat—as almost all our home-taught native vocalists do; Mr. Sims Reeves sings almost invariably from his chest. Moreover, Mr. Sims Reeves is one of the most finished, refined, and varied singers of the day. How are these excellences to be "imitated," unless by an artist somewhat similarly gifted? It is unnecessary to enumerate all the striking qualities Mrs. Howard Paul should possess to enable her to produce a perfect imitation of Mr. Reeves. That they are entirely beyond her power to "reproduce," her best friends must know, and should assure her of, if, in reality, she labours under the impression that her "imitation" is no caricature.

It may be asserted that there are many who give wonderful imitations of celebrated actors without being actors themselves, and that consequently it does not follow that one who imitates well must be accomplished in an equal degree with his original. To this it is answered, that the imitator of an actor, tragic or comic, selects a part only of a performance, and is careful that that part shall enable him to exhibit some strong mannerism or special characteristic; or involve points for which the artist has made himself conspicuous. An entire speech, or a whole scene may be chosen, but no one yet has undertaken to sustain a part throughout a play in imitation of some known great actor. The performance of "Come into the garden, Maud," by Mr. Sims Reeves, is as complete, by comparison, as a character impersonated by Macready or Robson. It is not a fragment, nor a piece hewn out of a perfect whole. It is a perfect whole, and in it the artist puts forth his strength, calling in the aid of those qualities which make up an accomplishment not surpassed by any modern vocalist.

Mrs. Howard Paul's indignation is founded on the supposition that in imitation caricature is inadmissible. On the contrary, exaggeration is the very soul of imitation as adopted by the lady. Every frequenter of the opera remembers how, some years past, at the Royal Italian Opera, Tamburini and Madame Viardot used to take off each other's peculiarities in the well-known duet in Fioravanti's opera-buffa, *La Prova d'un Opera seria*, and what effect they produced by well-seasoned caricature. Of course sufficient resemblance was preserved to render the caricature recognisable. If Mrs. Howard Paul sang as well as Mr. Sims Reeves, or one tithe as well, the hearers, in place of being amused, would lament the waste of such talents, and regret that she did not apply them to worthier and more legitimate uses. We believe that the lady is impressed with the idea that her "imitation" is perfect in every respect, or she would not have written the letter to the *Manchester Examiner and Times*. Nevertheless, she has underrated as well as overrated her powers. Her "imitation" is, in truth, not exactly what the journal terms it, "a droll piece of

burlesque," but a highly amusing caricature, an exaggerated embodiment of the artist's peculiarities and idiosyncracies, without, however, we need hardly add, a single vocal excellence to remind one forcibly of the eminent original. As long as people believed they went to see and hear a clever caricature, they were pleased and gratified—for the world in general is but too delighted to "assist" at a great reputation being roughly handled and turned into mockery. Now, however, that Mrs. Howard Paul openly asserts she "imitates," and does not "caricature" Mr. Sims Reeves, she challenges criticism, and must expect little leniency from newspaper reporters and less admiration from the public.

That the portraiture, or "reproduction" of Mr. Sims Reeves by Mrs. Howard Paul has obtained an extraordinary success cannot be denied, and success must count for something in the estimate of a thing's value. We will go farther and acknowledge that Mrs. Howard Paul has gained more celebrity by her "imitation" of the tenor, than by any other performance she has submitted to the public. She has, consequently, the most powerful of all reasons for believing in its excellence, and for making it a feature in her entertainment. Nevertheless, while subscribing to its merit as an exaggerated picture, we cannot help thinking that Mrs. Howard Paul lowers her talent by attempting that, which however well accomplished, cannot be placed within the province of legitimate art; which, in its most perfect achievement, is evidence of no original capabilities; and which, though lauded to the skies, and made the basis of a remarkable popularity, is constituted merely to please the groundlings and make the judicious grieve. Mrs. Howard Paul has talent in abundance of her own. Why not turn it to the best purposes? To get laughed at for hitting off Mr. Sims Reeves to a T, as the saying is, is but small praise. Let her display the same pertinacity, the same determination, the same study, skill, tact, and felicity in taking off the specialties and peculiarities of that antiquated lady, Dame Nature, and we have not the least doubt that louder applause and more enduring approbation will be the consequence.

"WERE it not for the stool on which thou sittest," said Panurge, eyeing Pantagruel with marvellous insolence, "thou wouldest now be on the ground in an ignoble position, which can only be described by saying that it resembleth the letter L."

"It is the letter R that is considered offensive, inasmuch as it resembleth the growl of a dog," interposed Epistemon, "and doubtless thou bearest in mind the sentence of Persius, 'Sonat hic de nare canina litera.'"

"I bear in mind that thou art a blockhead and a churl to boot," bellowed Panurge, "interrupting me with a parade of useless erudition, that beareth not upon the subject of my discourse. I maintain, also," he continued, turning to Pantagruel, with heightened insolence, "that, were it not for the table on which thou leanest, thine ill-favoured nose would be upon the floor."

"I admit the truth of thy propositions, barring the phrase 'ill-favoured,'" said Pantagruel, with mild dignity, "but I cannot comprehend the impudent tone wherewith thou propoundest them."

"Personal remarks are an evidence of discourtesy," interrupted Epistemon, "as Persius hath it—

"Non hic qui in crepidas Graiorum ludere gestit
Sordidus et lusco qui possit dicere: lusce."

"May'st thou be hanged, with Persius about thy neck, and all the commentaries thereon attached to thy feet to give something like due weight to thy skinny carcase," thundered Panurge; then, turning to Pantagruel, he continued, "Whereas, if thou wert elsewhere—say in a sponging-house, or the hulks, or a penal settlement, or a penitentiary—

"Illustrate thy meaning as pleasantly as thou canst," said Pantagruel blandly.

"Whereas, if thou wert elsewhere, the table would yet be in its place, likewise the stool."

"Still granted," observed Pantagruel, "but what dost thou infer from this? It seemeth to me that thou hast encumbered thy brain with a number of empty propositions, wherewith thou canst frame no syllogism."

"Not at all," replied Panurge, "though I reason rather by enthymeme than in strict syllogistic form. My inference is that thou art inferior to the stool and the table, and that, consequently, the joiner who produced them is superior to thy father Gargantua."

"As Persius hath it," interposed Epistemon,

"—An deecat pulmonem rumpere ventis,
Stommate quod Tusco ranum millesime ducis."

Whereupon Pantagruel dealt him such a blow on the head, that he spake not again for the remainder of the evening. Then, fixing his eyes upon Panurge, Pantagruel spake thus:

"Communitic blasphemers! Swinish leveller! Dreg of Soho! Fraterniser with filth! Where didst thou pick up the treasonable doctrines that will cause me to annihilate thee like an intrusive flea? What base forum of low debate hast thou rendered baser still by thy foul presence?"

"None at all, my liege," said Panurge; "I have learnt all my wisdom from the civil tribunal of the Seine."

"The devil thou hast!" shouted Pantagruel. "Then shalt thou be heard rather than slain. Give me a notion of thy strange schooling."

"Why it appears," said Panurge, "that three Frenchmen—I may make them four if I add a lady—but she doth not materially affect the case."

"Then leave her out by all means, old friend," remarked Pantagruel, "as it will tend to the condensation of thy tale."

"Well, then, three Frenchmen wrote a fairy spectacle for the Cirque of Paris, to which they gave the name of *Cri Cri*."

"The humour of that name escapeth me," said Pantagruel.

"So it doth me," said Panurge, "but that is not to the point. Well, the piece is rubbish—rot—bosh—bunkum."

"Shorten thy criticism," suggested Pantagruel.

"But," continued Panurge, "it containeth an excellent trick, involving the strange transformation of a tree."

"I see," said Pantagruel, "the people marvelled that so fair a tree flourished on so scurvy a soil."

"Precisely," assented Panurge. "Now the inventor and fabricator of the trick contendeth that, as the piece would have fallen flat as a flounder without the support of his trick, he ought to be considered an author, and enjoy the privileges attached to that position. And so also thinketh the Civil Tribunal of the Seine, before whom the question was brought."

"I understand," said Pantagruel, sadly. "That which supporteth ranketh higher than that which is supported."

"Unquestionably."

"Therefore the stool on which I sit and the table on

which I lean, though merely of wood, rank higher than I who am endowed with a fine wit;—even as the trick of the tree, though a mere piece of mechanism, ranketh higher than the emanations of the author's brain, seeing that they would have been unprofitable without it."

"Indubitably."

"Wilt thou always think in this way?" asked Pantagruel.

"Perhaps not," said Panurge, "the authors are about to appeal to a higher court, and when the cause cometh on I shall go to a new fountain of instruction."

"That rejoiceth me much" said Pantagruel. And so they parted.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

MUS. BAC. ET MUS. DOC., OXON.

SIR,—I have within the last few days been rejoiced to hear that the above degrees are now becoming of some value, and as, from some late remarks, your readers and yourself are evidently in ignorance of what is required of candidates for such honours, I will briefly state the particulars.

The Mus. Bac. Degree.—Previous to the year 1856, all that was required of a candidate for the degree of Mus. Bac. was an exercise in five vocal parts, with accompaniment for at least a quintett band. This was to be approved by the professor as grammatical and regular, and then publicly performed at Oxford. A certificate had also to be presented of having studied music for seven years, signed by three credible musicians. This was all, and the fees were exorbitantly high. But matters are different now. By a new statute, which was passed in 1856 at the suggestion of the present professor, an annual examination (both *vivâ voce* and on paper) was superadded, which must now be passed by every candidate whose exercise has been approved, ere it may be performed before the University. Also, it is now allowed to dispense with any instrument but the organ (if the candidate wishes it) at the performance, in order to diminish the expense. The fees have also been reduced to less than half, so that the whole expense need not exceed *twelve pounds*, including the fee of a guinea to the professor. The examination is pretty tough, as, last time, two out of six were rejected whose exercises had passed muster; and, besides that, no less than four exercises were rejected during the year, making a total of ten candidates, of whom only four passed.

The Mus. Doc. Degree.—The candidates for the doctorate had to compose an exercise in eight real vocal parts, and with full orchestral accompaniment. They have now in addition (under the new statute) to pass also an examination *entirely on paper*. The expense, of course, will depend on the *band* used in performance, but the fees are not quite double those for the *Mus. Bac. degree*.

Some of your readers may, perhaps, be glad to receive the above information, which I have from Sir Frederick Ouseley himself, the present Professor at Oxford, a correspondence having taken place between us on the subject of degrees. I was in utter ignorance of any change having been effected, and I rejoice to think that Sir Frederick Ouseley has done, and is doing all he possibly can to make the musical degrees at Oxford of real value.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Aug. 23. THOMAS LLOYD FOWLE, Mus. Doc., M.A.

[The above letter was mislaid, or it should have been inserted when first sent.—Ed. M. W.]

THE BAND AT THE BRADFORD FESTIVAL.

SIR,—In your last week's publication there is a letter, signed "A Musician," purporting to be a reply to some remarks in the *Musical World* of the previous week, quoted from the *Leeds Express*, concerning the band at the late Bradford Festival. With the quoted remarks concerning Mr. Blagrove and the local instrumentalists, I entirely concur. It is true that considerable advantage is gained by any body of men by united action—so far as precision is concerned. But, surely, no one will say that precision is the only thing required of an instrumentalist. In my opinion, Mr. Blagrove's services in an orchestra are worth three times as much as those of the majority of the violinists engaged at Bradford.

Now, as to the local instrumentalists, I am one of those who hold the opinion that a provincial musical festival should have a far more extended influence, and be productive of far higher results, than the mere performance of great works by the greatest *artists*. It should

be a periodical event when the genuine talent of local musicians should be recognised—an event to which an aspirant for musical honours might look forward to, and back upon, with pleasure. To have taken part, however humble, in a grand festival, should be considered an honourable distinction; and to provide against mediocrity in this respect, none should perform who were not considered competent by the conductor.

At the Leeds Festival, I believe the band was engaged irrespective of party. The best London and the best West Riding instrumentalists were secured; and I need only, Mr. Editor, refer to your own criticism of the performances in proof of their great excellence.

Yours, &c.,

FAIR-PLAY.

CONCERTS.

CRYSTAL PALACE.—The concert on Saturday last was a concert of price, very different in excellence and importance from its two preceding fellows of September the 3rd and August the 27th. Mr. E. T. Smith sent nearly all his great guns from the Drury Lane Italian Opera—more directly transferred from their provincial *tournee*—and intense was the excitement among the shareholders, season-ticket holders of the Crystal Palace, and the general public. More than seven thousand people flocked to the Sydenham fairy-hall, on Saturday last, allured by the magical names of Titiens, Piccolomini, and Giuglini, to say nothing of the less attractive appellations of Vaneri (Madame), Belart, Badiali, Violetti, Corsi, and Mercuriali, with, not of the *troupe*, Borchardt (Madame), and Aldighieri (Signor). The weather was propitious, the programme (all things considered) excellent, and the day a perfect gala. Mr. Augustus Manns, as in duty bound, we suppose—although why, we cannot understand—resigned his *bâton* for the nonce (query, for the nonsense?) to two Italian conductors, Signor Arditi and Signor Biletta—an acknowledgment, we take it, that two Ansonian *chefs-d'orchestre* are required to supply the place of one Teutonic. This is a vaunting triumph for Mr. Augustus Manns, who henceforth must not forget that he is as good as two Italian conductors.

The band did not play so conspicuous a part as in the vulgate hebdomadal entertainments under Mr. Manns's direction. Two overtures, those to *Masaniello* and *Il Barbiere*, alone broke the long line of vocalities. Madlle. Titiens was the particular star of the first part; Mademoiselle Piccolomini of the second. The great German artist sang the cavatina, "Ernani, involami," from *Ernani*, the duet, "Quis est homo," from Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, with Mad. Borchardt, and the part of Lucy in the sestet, "Chi mi frena," from *Lucia di Lammermoor*. In the first, Mdle. Titiens was as brilliant and full of "dash" as Mdle. Sophie Cruvelli; in the second she was imperfectly supported; in the last she was transcendent. We never, literally, heard the music of Lucy, in the sestet, sung so powerfully and so magnificently. In the same part, Signors Badiali and Violetti roared the boisterous bass duet in *I Puritani* without creating much sensation; Signor Badiali was encored in "Largo al factotum;" Signor Giuglini sang the romance, "Al' appar," from *Martha*; and Signor Violetti supplied a strong and stimulating version of the aria, "Non più andrai," from the *Nozze di Figaro*. Mdle. Piccolomini began her share in the second part with the everlasting duet "Parigi, o cara," from the *Traviata*, given with Signor Giuglini, followed by the song from the *Bohemian Girl*, "I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls." She was encored in both, of course. Signor Belart sang the aria, "Ah, si, ben mio," from the *Trovatore*, with much sweetness, but hardly with the Giuglini intensity of sentiment. It would have been better had Signor Giuglini been allotted this air, and Signor Belart that from *Martha*. Madame Vaneri recommended herself in the Scotch ballad "Annie Laurie," by much simplicity of style and a pleasing voice. Madame Vaneri's pronunciation at once declared her an Englishwoman, or one who had dwelt long in the Islands of the Free. Signor Aldighieri created but little impression in the popular air "Il balen," which he has voice enough to sing, if he could sing it. Madame Borchardt hardly obtained the applause she merited in the cavatina, "Nobil Signor," from the *Huguenots*, which, to our thinking at least, she sang extremely well. The concert terminated with

the grand finale, or *preghiera*, "Dal tuo stellato," from *Mosè in Egitto*, given by all the singers without chorus, whereby more than half the effect was lost.

The usual performance on the great organ, by Mr. James Coward; the usual display of the upper series of fountains; the usual performance by the band of the Royal Marines; and "Westward, Home," was the cry.

On Wednesday, the Tonic Sol-fa Association gave their third great festival in the Crystal Palace. The first took place, as an experiment, in 1857, was repeated last year in consequence of its eminent success, and now may be said to have resolved itself into an annual demonstration. Our readers are, or should be by this time, tolerably well acquainted with the "Tonic Sol-fa" system. If not, we cannot pretend, in this place, to indoctrinate them, but refer them to the pamphlet of the Rev. John Curwen, of Plaistow, the originator, we believe, of the system; to sundry works by Mr. W. S. Young, to be had of the author, 3, Wood-street Spitalfields; or to the pages of the *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, for, verily, the system has a journal of its own. We need only state here that the system works well to a certain point; that by its use elementary instruction can be imparted more easily, perhaps, than by any other method; and that in plain songs, and in chants, hymns, and choruses, where simple harmonies only are employed, the student has less to learn than on the old plan. When, however, the promulgators of the new method of notation claim for it unqualified eulogy on the ground of its general bearing upon musical instruction and the universality of its application, they are simply injuring the object which they are desirous to benefit, and converting friends into opponents. The Tonic Sol-fa system is necessarily restricted to the simplest form of vocal music. To elaborate vocal scores it would be vain to attempt its application. In instrumental music the endeavour would be still more absurd. The good really effected by the new system is the dissemination of a love for music among thousands of children, and the simplification of instruction to a certain extent, so that those who run may read. Beyond that, the new notation is valueless, and worse than valueless, inasmuch as it prevents the pupil from learning, and drives him back to the old method after he has gained a certain height. A few words about the performance on Wednesday will, after such brief discussion, prove acceptable.

The announcement of the great choral festival looked very enticing, and many anticipated as large a concourse as was assembled at the Foresters' *fête* some weeks since, when more than sixty thousand persons were present. Four thousand children and one thousand adults were advertised to sing in the great Handel orchestra. Not more, however, than half the number attracted by the Foresters' day congregated. The weather, it must be acknowledged, was anything but tempting. The rain fell at intervals throughout the morning, and everybody complained of the cold. It was certainly no day worthy the middle of September, and vast numbers of holiday folk were doubtless kept at home by the state of the elements. A good thirty thousand, nevertheless, found their way to the Palace, and enjoyed themselves all day with eating, drinking, and music. The company, if not fashionably attired, nor of decided art sympathies, was well-behaved and decorous, and munched, imbibed, and listened to the music with equal complacency. In fact, the majority of the visitors appeared to care very little for what was going forward in the great orchestra, and turned their individual attention to the creature comforts with which they had provided themselves as for Epsom or Ascot, on the Derby or Cup Day. We never remember so little applause on a grand juvenile festival, when applause in general is too liberally bestowed, and wonder that so many encores were accepted, when, except in one or two instances, there was really no approach to enthusiasm. The performance, on the whole, was entitled to the highest commendation, but this was no reason why the conductors should have displayed such readiness to convert the desire of the minority into a general expression. There were twelve pieces in the first part; six were encoired and repeated, making eighteen performances by the choir. The second part contained fourteen pieces, which, with five

encores, made nineteen—the sum total of pieces given by the juveniles amounting to thirty-six, no inconsiderable work to get through, it must be owned, in one afternoon. The pieces redemanded were Webbe's glee, "Swiftly from the mountain's brow;" part-song "We waited for an omnibus," the music arranged from Zelter, by W. E. Hickson, (Zelter's tune being strongly suggested, be it understood, by the duet "Il suon del 'arp' angeliche," from Donizetti's *I Martiri*); American glee "Hurrah;" "Rule Britannia;" part song "The Frost," by G. F. Root; chorus from *Judas Maccabeus*, "Hail Judea! happy land;" glee, "Hope and Sunshine," by W. E. Hickson; part-song, "The Fox and the Grapes," by Dr. Lowell Mason; prize glee, "The Fisherman," by Benjamin Congreve; and part-song, "Jerusalem, my glorious home," by Dr. Mason. All were good performances, some, like "We waited for an omnibus," "Rule Britannia," and Mendelssohn's canon, "The Skylark's Song"—not encoired—really admirable, almost beyond the pale of criticism. In the part-songs "The Frost," and "The Fox and the Grapes," the choir laid themselves open to animadversions. The time was broken, and there was evidenced a want of readiness and precision, suggestive of carelessness or insufficiency of rehearsals. This was the only flaw in a performance, which, all things considered, may veritably be entitled "incomparable," and which reflects the highest credit on the masters, teachers, conductors, and all concerned. The concert terminated with the "National Anthem," in which a large number of the audience joined, and the last bar had scarcely been accomplished when the four thousand young voices suddenly broke forth, and screamed with delight, and the eight thousand young hands, clapped, or waved flags and banners, or pitched aloft their caps in uncontrollable and unusual ecstasy. The children then dispersed, hundreds hurrying off to the gardens to obtain a good position to see the fountains play.

The performance in the great orchestra was not entirely confined to the choral displays of the juvenile four thousand. Miss Stirling executed several *morceaux* on the great organ, before, in the course of, and after the concert. Among these we may specify Macfarren's overture to *Don Quixote*, Mendelssohn's sonata in B flat, concerto in B flat by Handel, andante in F by Haydn, prelude and fugue in G major by Sebastian Bach, and minuet in E flat by Mozart.

We left the Palace about half-past six. Crowds were then seated at the round tables having tea; crowds were dining in the eighteen-penny rooms; crowds were wandering at random through the aisles, the different courts, the galleries, and up and down the stair-cases; multitudes were dispersed through various parts of the grounds; while two human streams flowed side by side down the avenues leading to the east and west stations. The railway regulations seemed complete in every way. No one was disappointed, no one was incommode, and every facility was provided by the officials for ingress and egress. Nothing could be more satisfactory than the whole proceeding. Even the babes in arms—and their name was legion on Wednesday at the Crystal Palace—felt comfortable and, as it were, at home. Perhaps they knew it was a children's festival, and were silent from instinct.

THE CONSERVATIVE LAND SOCIETY.—The officers and clerks of the society celebrated the inauguration of the eighth year last Wednesday by a dinner at Simpson's in the Strand, Charles Lewis Gruneisen, Esq., the secretary, being in the chair, supported by Henry Smith, Esq., the solicitor, James Wyllson, Esq., the surveyor, Charles Belton, Esq., accountant and cashier, Messrs. Edsall, Powell, Stacey, Hill, Middleton, G. Wyllson, &c. In proposing the toast of Prosperity to the Conservative Land Society, and the healths of Viscount Ranelagh, the chairman, Colonel Brownlow Knox, M.P., the vice-chairman, and the other members of the executive committee, the secretary stated that from the formation of the society, on the 7th September, 1852, and the 7th September, 1859, 15,042 shares, representing £752,100, had been issued. The cash receipts were £403,872 12s. 9d.; the withdrawals only £91,199 10s. 11d.; the sale of land amounted to £228,046 2s. 6d.; the rights of choice were 7,853, of which 5,449 had been exhausted, leaving 2,404 on the

register; the last seniority share was 10,042, the last share No. 15,042, and 36 estates had been purchased in 13 counties. The returns towards the Michaelmas quarter up to the 7th inst. were already larger than any preceding quarter in 1858-9.

PROVINCIAL.

THE LATE BRADFORD FESTIVAL.—The net profits from this festival were about £500. Several donations have been added, and there is now a sum of £700 to hand over to the Dispensary and Infirmary.

LEEDS TOWN HALL ORGAN.—Last Saturday evening, the Town Hall was a scene of much excitement. Above 3,000 persons assembled to hear the organ performance by Mr. Spark, and to see the remains of a floral exhibition which had been held for the benefit of the Leeds Dispensary. The programme was a popular one, and the enthusiasm of the immense audience could scarcely be kept within bounds. Vociferous *encores* were plentiful, and the pleasure evidently experienced by the working-classes with the organ music was delightful to witness.

OPERA IN LEEDS.—Last Monday Verdi's *Trovatore* was performed at the Princess's Theatre, by Mdlle. Piccolomini, Signor Belart, and party, when a full audience was attracted. The opera was admirably put upon the stage, and the fair *prima donna* was called before the curtain several times. The lessee announced that he had made arrangements for the appearance, on his stage in opera, of several pupils of Mrs. Wood (the once celebrated Miss Paton), and also that he hoped to succeed in concluding an engagement with Mr. Sims Reeves. This announcement was received with tremendous applause.

DUBLIN.—(From our own Correspondent).—Two miscellaneous concerts will be given in the Ancients' Hall, Brunswick-street, on Monday and Wednesday evenings in next week, when Madame Lind Goldschmidt is announced to sing with Signor Belletti. This will constitute an unexpected pleasure for the good folk of Dublin, who anticipated hearing Madame Goldschmidt at the approaching Handel Centenary Festival only. The eminent violinist, Herr Joseph Joachim, has also been engaged. Madame Goldschmidt is put down to sing the cavatina, "Qui la voce," from *I Puritani*; the scena, "Care campagne," from *La Sonnambula*; the grand scena from *Der Freischütz*; the air, "On mighty pens," from the *Creation*; Swedish "Echo song," and an air to Moore's words, commencing—

"This world is all a fleeting show
For man's illusion given"—

composed by Mr. Otto Goldschmidt. It therefore appears certain that Madame Goldschmidt is determined to return to public life once more, more particularly as she has agreed to sing at Belfast as well as Dublin. It is possible that her acceptance of these engagements may resolve itself into a mere mission of charity. The general impression here, however, seems to be that the announced concerts are but preliminary to the great artist's re-entrance on the scene of all her glories, and that the name of Jenny Lind will again shine forth bright among the brightest of the reigning queens of song. The approaching Handel Festival is creating the utmost excitement among all classes of the musical community, and the demand for tickets surpasses all expectation. A peculiar interest attaches to the performance of the *Messiah* in Dublin at this moment, and under the present circumstances. Handel's great work was first performed in Dublin, in 1742, on behalf of the funds of the Mercer's Hospital. For the charities of the same institution the centenary performance of the same oratorio is about to be given, and the celebration will be at once a homage to the genius of the composer, and a recognition of the fact that the greatest masterpiece of sacred music was first introduced to fame in Dublin. The committee have finally settled that the oratorio shall be performed during the last week in October. All the arrangements have been concluded, and the forthcoming festival is expected to be the most imposing, if not the grandest, ever given in the Irish capital.

At LIVERPOOL the Italian operas have proved so successful, that a new series is announced, with Mdlles. Titiens, Piccolo-

mini; Mesdames Vaneri and Borchardt, Signors Giuglini, Belart, Badiali, Vialetti, &c.

MAD. GRISI has been starring it at Scarborough, and exciting enthusiasm among the visitors to the Spa. A concert was given at the Music Hall, on the 26th ult., when Madame Grisi sang the scena, "Tacea la notte," from the *Trovatore*, "The last rose of summer," in Italian, and "Home, sweet home," in the vernacular, accompanied on the pianoforte by Mr. Julian Adams.

DR MARK AND HIS LITTLE MEN AT ROMSEY.—Dr. Mark had the honour to perform with his Little Men, by special request, before Lord and Lady Palmerston last Tuesday, at Romsey. Amongst the audience were Lady Stanley and several distinguished families, all of whom expressed themselves highly gratified. Lord Palmerston, at the conclusion of the concert, shook Dr. Mark warmly by the hand, expressing his high approbation both of the performance of the Little Men and of Dr. Mark's system of education.

FOREIGN.

PARIS.—(From our own Correspondent).—The long expected *Roméo et Juliette* has at last made its appearance on the boards of the Théâtre-impérial de l'Opéra. The success was by no means tantamount to general expectation, and the administration has been severely censured for expending so much time and pains on a production, musically speaking, devoid of interest, and from which no favourable reception by the public could have been anticipated. The defence set forth is, that a new character was wanted for Madame Vestvali, that the lady was allowed to make her own selection, and that she chose *Roméo* in Bellini's *I Capuletti e Montecchi*, a character hallowed by the performances of Pasta, Malibran, and Viardot Garcia. It was certainly a mistake to allow Madame Vestvali to make her own choice. Had she been at the Italiens it would have been a very different affair. Never was music less suited to the French Grand-Opéra than that of poor Bellini's *I Capuletti e Montecchi*. One of the earliest works of the composer, it evidences all his weakness, all his want of force and variety, and never once rises beyond mawkish sentimentalism, much less soars into the regions of passion. Many of the airs are fresh and beautiful, and the tender grace of Bellini's talent is not to be concealed. As yet, however, he was deficient in power and energy, and wrote like a love-sick maid rather than a poet tortured by internal throes to rid himself of his feelings. The history of the adaptation of Shakspeare's play to the Italian stage is curious.

Zingarelli was the first Italian composer who took the subject of *Roméo and Juliet* for an opera. Madame Pasta made the hero one of her most powerful impersonations. The air "Ombra adorata," so well known in the concert-rooms, is almost the only fragment of Zingarelli's work now remembered; and yet, strange to say, not Zingarelli but Crescentini wrote the air. Vaccaj next undertook to adapt Shakspeare's immortal tragedy, or, more properly speaking, a *libretto* founded thereupon, to music. To distinguish his work from that of Zingarelli he called it *Giulietta e Roméo*, in place of *Roméo e Giulietta*. Vaccaj's opera was performed somewhere towards the end of the Restoration, with a moderate success only. A French opera on the same subject had been produced at the Opéra-Comique, the music by the well-known composer Steibelt.

* Zingarelli's opera, *Roméo e Giulietta*, was represented for the first time at the Tuileries, in 1809, was performed at the Théâtre de l'Impératrice in 1812, and revived in 1816 for the *début* of Mdlle. Giuditte Pasta, then a mere girl, with by no means strong indications of that transcendent talent which, some few years later, astonished all Europe. In 1821, the same opera was brought out at the Italiens, with Pasta as *Roméo* and Mdlle. Naldi as *Juliet*. *Roméo e Giulietta* was produced for the last time in Paris, in 1825, Pasta retaining the character of the young Mantuan lover. Vaccaj wrote his *Giulietta e Roméo* to a libretto by Romani, in 1825, for the Scala at Milan. Two years later it was given at Paris. In 1829 Malibran astonished the Parisian world by her magnificent and unparalleled performance of *Roméo* in the same piece. The final act of this opera has now become amalgamated with Bellini's *I Capuletti e Montecchi*.—Ed. M. W.

This did not greatly conduce to the glory of the theatre or the composer.

In 1833, Bellini's *I Capuletti e Montecchi* was produced at Paris, Mdle. Giulietta Grisi, then the rising star of the Opera, performing the part of Juliet, and her eldest sister, Giuditta, that of Romeo. Despite of the fine singing of the two sisters, that of the younger more especially, the opera did not succeed. The last act, of course the most important, was found the weakest, and no talent could invest it with the least interest. The opera was withdrawn, and was not revived until 1849, when it was reproduced for Mdle. Angri, who appeared in Romeo with, however, but little effect. Previous to this, the last scene of Vaccaj's opera had been added in Italy to the first three acts of Bellini, and thus the opera of *I Capuletti e Montecchi* has been given up to the present time. Vaccaj's final scene is highly dramatic, and, if not exactly what it might be made by Rossini, or even Verdi, is sufficiently powerful and striking to show off great histrionic and lyric powers, and is a special favourite with *mezzo-sopranos* and exceptional *contraltos*.

The French translation has been effected for the Opera by M. Nutter, and appears to satisfy the connoisseurs. The difficulty of adapting Italian words to a French version even of an Italian work cannot be over-estimated. Moreover, the task is one of the most ungrateful imaginable.

Madame Félicité Vestvali is not an Italian. She is of Polish extraction, and was born at Cracow in 1834. Her parents, who belong to the higher ranks of life, gave her a sound literary and musical education. She was sent to Italy at an early age, and studied singing under the celebrated Mercadante at Naples. In 1853 she *débüté* at the Great Scala theatre, in the character of Azucena in the *Trovatore*, and performed it thirty-two times the same season. From Naples she went to London, and appeared at Drury Lane, creating there, as your operatic readers must remember, no remarkable sensation. The best judges, however, found her talent striking, and pronounced her to be a first-rate artist in embryo. In London, indeed, she had no opportunity afforded her to display her specialities to the best advantage, and she quitted England, leaving scarcely a memento behind her. In all probability not one in five hundred who have heard and seen Madame Vestvali in London remembers her name. The offer of an engagement in America was eagerly accepted, and Madame Vestvali went from England to New York, where she sang with Grisi and Mario. In the character of Arsace, in Rossini's *Semiramide*, she wrested unqualified approbation from the New York critics. She made a tour through the United States, and was everywhere received with favour. Last year she returned to Europe, and at first refused all offers of engagements, intending to repose a while in Italy, after the fatigues of a twelvemonth. Yielding, however, to the solicitations of some friends, she joined the select company of artists which inaugurated the restored theatre of Plaisance, and appeared as Azucena in the *Trovatore* and Leonora in *La Favorita*.

Madame Vestvali is adapted by nature for contralto parts. She is extremely tall, of commanding appearance, and even more masculine in looks and bearing than Mdle. Johanna Wagner, with whom, by the way, she has many things in common. Her voice is deep, full-toned, powerful, and in *timbre* singularly sonorous. She possesses nothing of the Italian fluidity and clearness, but sings more after the manner of your English artists, whose voices seem to be, as it were, confined to the throat. Madame Vestvali is too prone to display her low notes, which, being greatly guttural, are by no means greatly agreeable. She is given to exaggeration, too, and emphasises a great deal more than propriety demands. With all these faults the lady has considerable merit. The quality of her voice at once recommends it to the hearer; a splendid figure, and a face, if not exceedingly handsome, full of meaning and character, offer no inconsiderable claims to popular favour; while energy, expression, and a power of realising emotions are equally at command of the artist. Madame Vestvali is not a finished singer, like Alboni or Guarducci; she is rough and rugged, like Mdle. Johanna Wagner, and resembles her more than any one I have seen. A part like Romeo requires an artist with the powers of a Malibran

to do it justice. Mad. Vestvali was more successful in the acting than the singing. In fact, the music of Romeo is little suited to her bold and vigorous style. In the last scene, where she has to sing Vaccaj's music throughout, she both sang and acted with great force, and moved the audience, for the first time, into something like emotion. The flowing and graceful *cantilenas* of the earlier part of the opera did not suit her at all. In my humble opinion, it would have been much better for the *débütante* to appear in Azucena, as the energetic strains of Verdi would have found in her a more perfect interpreter than the smooth *cantabiles* of Bellini. What effect the new production and the new singer have had upon the public, I cannot at this moment inform you. Many seem to think that it was an utter waste of time to produce Bellini's mawkishly sentimental opera on the boards of the great national theatre. I am told Madame Vestvali made it a *sine quâ non* that she should come out in Romeo. If that be so, it would appear that she was more desirous to display the grace of her person than the qualities of her voice.

Madame Gueymard-Lauters made a delightful Juliet, singing the music most charmingly, and acting with grace and feeling, if not with intensity and power. M. Gueymard was well suited in the "fiery Tibald," who, however, in the opera, appears to have lost all his fire. A *dévoisement* was introduced into the second act, the music of which was made up of several of Bellini's most agreeable motives. Mdle. Zina Richard was the *première danseuse*, and danced with all that lightness, agility, and grace for which she has made herself famous in London as well as Paris.

I have only room to say that a new operetta, in one act, entitled, *Le Fauteuil de mon Oncle*, words by M. René de Rovigo, music by Mdle. Colinet, has been brought out at the Bouffes Parisiens with success; and that Madame Miolan-Carvalho made her *rentrée*, and the tenor Guardi his *début*, at the Théâtre-Lyrique, in *Faust*.

VIENNA.—*Der Wanderer*, a local journal, announces as an official fact, that the suppression of the Italian Opera has been definitively resolved upon. The difficulty of obtaining Italian artists, and the neglect of national singers for foreigners, have been assigned as the cause.—The *Pardon de Ploërmel*, it is said, will be produced at the Court Theatre, in the month of November. The principal characters will be entrusted to Mdle. Liebhart (Dinorah), and M. Beck (Hoel). The revival of Marschner's *Hans Heiling* is also announced.

MILAN.—The autumnal season of the Scala was to have opened on the 5th inst., with Mercadante's *Giuramento*. Two new operas, *Riccardo III.*, written expressly for the theatre, by the *maestro* Meiners, and *Lorenzino*, by Pacini, are announced. Two grand ballets also are named, *Una Stella* and *Cleopatra*. Mdle. Poinot is engaged as *prima donna*, and will make her *début* on the opening night, as Elisa in the *Giuramento*, with Madame Marini, Signors Gentili and Crivelli.

ST. PETERSBURGH.—The Italian opera was announced to commence the second week in September. The composition of the *troupe* is as follows—*prime donne*—Mesdames Bernardi, Brambilla, Charton-Demeur, Lagrue; *prima donna contralto*—Mad. Nantier-Didiée; *comprimaria*—Mad. Everardi; *primi tenori*—Signors Calzolari, Mongini, Tamberlik; *tenore*—Signor Bettini; *baritoni*—Signors de Bassini, Everardi, Giraltoni; *basso profondo*—Signor Marini; *basso buffo*—Signor Rossi; *basso*—Signor Polonini. The campaign opens with *Maria di Rohan*; and Meyerbeer's new opera, the *Pardon de Ploërmel*, will be the earliest novelty of the season.

OSTEND.—The season of the baths this year has been the most brilliant of any at this fashionable watering-place, within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, not only on account of the presence of royal and distinguished personages, among whom are found His Majesty the King of the Belgians, Her Royal Highness the Grand Duchess Helena, the Prince Regent of Prussia, the Duke of Brabant, the Count of Flanders, &c., but also by the *réunion* of a number of musical celebrities, of whom it is enough to name Signor Piatti, the violoncellist, M. Wieniawski, the violinist, Herr Rubinstein, pianist, Herr Haumann, M. and Madame de Blaes, the Count of Stainlein,

M. and Madame Leonard, M. Edouard Wolff, the violoncellist, M. Poorten, the Russian violinist, M. Berzekirski, and the tenor, M. Wicart. A concert was given at the Casino, and was so successful that a second was organised. It was proposed to have a quartet performed, the executants to be MM. Wieniawski, Léonard, Berzekirski. Unfortunately M. Wieniawski was ill, and could not play. At her departure, the Grand Duchess Helena sent him a magnificent brooch, with a pair of diamond ear-drops for his betrothed, a young English lady, whom he has since espoused.

MOZART—CHILD AND MAN.

(Continued from page 591.)

No. 41.

L. Mozart to his Wife.

Mantua, Jan. 11, 1770.

We arrived yesterday, and an hour after we were at the Opera. We are in excellent health, God be thanked. Wolfgangerl looks like a captain who has just gone through a campaign; the air and the chimney fires have tanned him, chiefly round the nose and the mouth; pretty much like the Emperor. My beauty has not greatly suffered as yet,—fortunately, for I should be sadly grieved.

I went to see the Prince of Taxis to-day, but he was away, and his gracious spouse, the Princess had so many letters to write she could not receive her compatriots. To-morrow we dine with Count Eugene d'Arco. At Verona we saw the Museum Lapidarium; you can read the description of it in Keyster's travels. I bring back with me, however, a volume concerning the antiquities of Verona. I should make this letter too heavy and too dear were I to inclose the papers which speak of Wolfgang. I send you one, however, in which there are two mistakes, namely, that they call him *maestro di capella*, and that they make him less than 13, whereas it should be under 14. I could send you all sorts of documents about him, for poets have vied with each other in singing his praises.

No. 42.

The Same to the Same.

Milan, Jan. 26, 1770.

On the 16th there was the usual weekly concert at Mantua, in the rooms of the Philharmonic Academy, to which we were invited. I wished you could have seen the *Teatrino* Academia. Never, in my life, have I seen anything prettier of the kind. It is not a theatre, but an opera house, with private boxes. Instead of the stage, there is a platform, on which the musicians are stationed, and behind the musicians is a row of private boxes for the audience.

I am at a loss to describe the multitude of people, the applause, the noise, the shouts, the "bravos" succeeding one upon another; in a word, the general admiration. Count Eugene d'Arco showed us every imaginable politeness at Mantua. As to the Prince of Taxis, it was impossible to obtain an audience. He was returning home just at the moment of our second visit. But we were told that the Prince had engagements which he could not put off, and begged we would come another time. The countenance, the trembling voice of the servant, and his confused expressions, showed me instantly that the prince had no desire to see us. God forbid I should disturb any one in the midst of engagements, especially when to do so involved a long journey and coach-hire into the bargain. Fortunately we have neither of us lost anything by not coming into closer contact, for we saw each other at a distance, and if I saved the cost of a coach, I spared him the fright of having to show me some politeness in return for the honours he met with at the court, and from the nobility of Salzburg.

I send you a piece of poetry written by a Signor Sartoretto, with whom we dined at Mantua. The next day came a servant bearing in gallant style upon a salver a magnificent bouquet, tricked out with red ribbons, to which was appended a four-ducet piece. The verses were stuck in the very centre of the bouquet. I can assure you that I have met everywhere with excellent people, and that everywhere we found friends quite marked in their feelings, who never left us till our departure, and would have done anything to make our stay agreeable. I may mention, for instance, the family of Count Spaursk at Inspruck; Baron Picini, Count Lador, Cristiani Cosmi, at Roveredo; Count

Carlo Emily, Marquis Carloti, Count Giusti, the house of Luggiatti, and especially M. Locatelli, at Verona; at Mantua, the house of Count d'Arco, and especially Signor Rottinelli, who, with his brother and sister-in-law, quite placed themselves at our disposal. The wife was full of solicitude for Wolfgang, as though she had been his mother, and we did not part without shedding tears.

I must also tell you, that neither at Mantua nor at Verona do concerts pay. Everyone comes in gratis; at Verona, only the nobility do so, as they alone contribute to the concerts; at Mantua, besides the nobility, the military and the citizens do, because the Academy is kept up by an endowment of the Empress. You will thereby be apprised that we are in no likelihood of becoming rich in Italy, and you must learn that it is much if one clears travelling expenses. Hitherto I have always succeeded in this. In the six weeks since our departure from Salzburg we have spent seventy ducats. For even when living *a parte*, and never dining at home scarcely, supper, the rooms, fire-wood are still so dear, that you never leave an inn without parting with about six ducats for only nine or ten days. I thank God I left you at home. In the first place, you could not have borne the cold; secondly, it would have cost us an enormous sum of money, and we could not have had the free quarters we are now enjoying in the Convent of the Augustines of St. Mark, where we are not saved all the expense, it is true, but we are commodiously and safely lodged, and quite close to His Excellency Count Firmiani. Every night our beds are warmed, so that Wolfgang is delighted to go to bed. One of the friars waits on us.

(To be continued.)

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